Montana Newsletter

Montana State Library

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MONTANA STATE LIBRARY

News UPDATE

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June 1990

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Update No. 14

Lois Dissly, head of circulation at the Bozeman Public Library, will pursue a master's degree in library science with $10,000 in training funds approved by the State Library Commission. Dissly, one of seven applicants for the LSCA Title I funds, is required to return to Montana and work at a public or state institutional library for two years after receiving her degree.

Layoffs and reductions in the book budget and in staff hours are anticipated at the Great Falls Public Library. On May 7, the library's board approved a fiscal 1991 budget of approximately $593,000--a reduction of about $35,000 from fiscal 1990. The library also plans to close on Mondays beginning July 1. Director Jim Heckel told the *Great Falls Tribune* if a local property tax reassessment results in a higher value for the current 7-mill levy and does not elicit a wave of tax protests, his first action will be to reopen the library on Mondays.

The executive committee for Montana's new Center for the Book met May 18 at the State Library and agreed to ask federation headquarters libraries in Missoula, Miles City and Glasgow to join the Lewis & Clark Public Library in Helena, the Great Falls Public Library, the Flathead County Library in Kalispell and the Parmly Billings Library as satellite centers. In other action, the committee agreed that the center, which has about $4,000 in seed money, will co-sponsor and help fund the June 23 Missoula Book Fair and will co-sponsor (with MLA) the State Library's application to host the 1991 May Hill Arbuthnot Lecture during MLA's annual conference May 1-4 in Missoula. The 1991 Arbuthnot Lecture will be given by Iona Opie of England, a renowned expert on children's literature and folklore.

An emergency levy approved by voters June 5 rescued the Lewis & Clark Public Library from a planned 35% cut in hours, a 53% reduction in book buying, staff layoffs and elimination of children's services. The levy, passed by 60% of the voters, will keep the library funded at 1989-90 levels.

A bond issue to fund a new Broadwater County Library and remodel the county courthouse in Townsend is being discussed by citizens and the county commission. Since the commission plans to remodel the courthouse to make it accessible to the handicapped, a new library was also suggested. The library is currently in the courthouse basement and has only about 1,100 square feet in which to house a 20,000-volume collection. A decision must be made by mid-August to get a bond issue on the November general election ballot.

An opinion piece by State Librarian Richard Miller about the plight of Montana's libraries got a good response from the press during National Library Week. The article, which reminded readers of the importance of libraries and encouraged stable and adequate financial support for them, was published in newspapers in Big Sandy, Big Timber, Billings, Cascade, Chester, Circle, Havre, Laurel, Malta and Wibaux.

The Butte-Silver Bow Public Library's third annual "Battle of the Books" was a great success, resulting in 42 teams of fourth- through sixth-graders from two elementary schools reading books and answering questions about them. Children's librarian Laurel Egan provided a list of 40 books for the children to read, and the grand prize was a trophy. According to Egan, a playoff of four teams was required on May 4 because all the teams were so good.

PLEASE RETURN

A special volunteer appreciation luncheon held June 7 in Helena honored the 70-some people who donate their time to help the Montana State Library provide services to users. Each volunteer who attended received a poem about the unique qualities of volunteers and a thank-you from State Library Commission Chair Mary Doggett, State Librarian Richard Miller, Director of the Library for the Blind & Physically Handicapped Barbara Ridgway and LBPH Volunteer Coordinator Gen Allen. Volunteers gave a total of more than 10,000 hours of their time to the State Library in 1989.

The Governor's Conference on Library and Information Services is scheduled for Jan. 6-8, 1991, at the Park Plaza Hotel in Helena. Energetic and concerned individuals are needed to serve on organizational committees planning the conference. Suggestions of potential delegates would also be helpful. Delegates will be selected from the following categories: librarians, trustees and friends, local government officials and the general public. A delegate nomination form will be available later this summer. For more information, contact conference coordinator Bob Cooper at 444-5350.

The Voluntary Certification Task Force will hold hearings in five of the six federations this summer to gather responses to the proposed plan for voluntary certification of public librarians. The project, funded by LSCA, came from the statewide plan for continuing education adopted in 1988 by the State Library Commission. After hearing input from librarians and trustees, the Task Force will submit the proposed plan to the Commission for approval and adoption in August.

The Blaine County Library in Chinook has a new TV and VCR in the library's meeting room. They will be used to show children's videos on Thursday afternoons this summer and will be available to groups that rent the meeting room. Getting the equipment took about a year's worth of effort.

Celebrities reading May 2 at the Great Falls Public Library's "Night of a Thousand Stars" included Iva Kolstad, wife of the lieutenant governor, and Attorney General Marc Racicot.

The following meetings are scheduled for JUNE/JULY:

June	23	Missoula Book Fair
	23-28	American Library Association Annual Conference, Chicago
	26	Golden Plains Voluntary Certification meeting, Glasgow
	27	Pathfinder Voluntary Certification meeting, Great Falls
	28	South Central Voluntary Certification meeting, Billings
July	4	Fourth of July Holiday
	7	Sagebrush Voluntary Certification meeting, Miles City
	18	Advisory Council, Helena
	21	MLA Continuing Education Committee, Bozeman

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